

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR
THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF ALABAMA
NORTHERN DIVISION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA)
)
v.) CASE NO. 2:07-cr-169-MEF
) (WO)
KEITH LASHON BELL)

O R D E R

On September 17, 2007, the defendant filed a Motion Continue (Doc. #17). While the granting of a continuance is left to the sound discretion of the trial judge, *United States v. Warren*, 772 F.2d 827, 837 (11th Cir. 1985), the court is, of course, limited by the requirements of the Speedy Trial Act, 18 U.S.C. § 3161. The Speedy Trial Act provides generally that the trial of a defendant in a criminal case shall commence within 70 days of the latter of the filing date of the indictment or the date the defendant appeared before a judicial officer in such matter. 18 U.S.C. §3161(c)(1). See *United States v. Vasser*, 916 F.2d 624 (11th Cir. 1990).

The Act excludes from this 70 day period any continuance that the judge grants "on the basis of his findings that the ends of justice served by taking such action outweigh the best interest of the public and the defendant in a speedy trial." 18 U.S.C. § 3161(h)(8)(A).

The motion states that defense counsel was appointed to represent Mr. Bell on August 28, 2007. Counsel has engaged in talks with the government in hopes of working out a plea agreement and needs additional time. Counsel for the government does not oppose the motion to continue. Consequently, the court concludes that a continuance of this case is

warranted and that the ends of justice served by continuing this case outweighs the best interest of the public and the defendant in a speedy trial. *See United States v. Davenport*, 935 F.2d 1223, 1235 (11th Cir. 1991)(reasonable time necessary for effective preparation is a significant factor for granting a continuance under the Speedy Trial Act).

Accordingly, it is hereby ORDERED:

1. That the defendant's motion filed on September 17, 2007 is GRANTED;
2. That the trial of this case is continued from the October 2, 2007 trial term to the January 14, 2008 trial term.
3. That the Magistrate Judge conduct a pretrial conference prior to the January 14, 2008 trial term.

DONE this 19th day of September, 2007.

/s/ Mark E. Fuller
CHIEF UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE